WKU KYVL FACULTY FOCUS GROUP
JANUARY 18, 2001, 2:00 – 3:00 P.M.

SUMMARY

Elaine E. Moore
KYVL Collections Work Group
and Focus Group Assistant Moderator

Eight faculty attended representing the departments of history, government, integrative studies, modern languages and intercultural studies, english, philosophy/religion, geography/geology, and music.

All faculty indicated they **used the databases for** their research (professional, departmental and personal) as well as assigned their students to use particular databases for their assignments. One faculty member linked to databases he wanted his students to use from his personal web page. Several faculty also stated they used specific databases to identify texts to order for their classes.

A recurring theme stated for the **motivation to use** library databases in general was because of the convenience of access from office or home and the availability of a breadth of databases with considerable full text. Further reasons for use, when asked specifically about KYVL databases, included that they save time (don't have to come into the library!), support web-based courses, and that they provided more information than a manual search.

The **most used KYVL databases** included Academic Search Elite, MasterFile Premier, BIP, Newspaper Source, Health Source Plus and Medline in EBSCOhost and ERIC, Article1st, Contents1st, WorldCat, and Union List of Periodicals in FirstSearch. All but one of the faculty were accessing these databases via the direct link to EBSCOhost or FirstSearch provided on the WKU Libraries on and off campus menus rather than through the KYVL Gateway link. **Most used non-KYVL databases** used (funded by WKU) included MLA and Music Literature (RILM) in FirstSearch; Philosoper's Index and Geography from SilverPlatter; ProQuest databases (did not specify which, but WKU offers ABI/INFORM and National Newspapers); and Project Muse.

The **most helpful aspects** of the databases included the convenience of remote access, finding material not available (or inconvenient to get) in the library, the EBSCO limiting capabilities in several databases such as the Peer Reviewed and Date limitations, the availability of both scholarly and general materials and the capability to search multiple databases at one time.

   Frustrating aspects of the KYVL databases included crashes and error messages, such as the "Do you want to debug this page?" when using the KYVL Gateway, and the lack of database coverage for certain subject areas. Several complained that BIP is not up-to-date or accurate and prefer amazon.com. Another frustration is the lack of a search history feature to allow one to save and reconstruct their search history. Another common frustration is not about the KYVL databases themselves but the struggle to convince students to use the KYVL databases rather than web search engines such as Ask Jeeves. All agreed this is an ongoing education problem.

   Subject areas lacking or needing better coverage in KYVL include gerontology, film studies, literature, geography, geology, music, philosophy, and history, especially medieval studies. A specific database suggested was Ageline for gerontology. J-STOR was mentioned several times as an essential source for full text core journals in most disciplines. The faculty member from the government department stated a former professor in her department complained of not having access to Lexis-Nexis and would like to see that offered by KYVL.

   The frequently used WKU funded non-KYVL databases may also need to be considered for KYVL inclusion if statewide academic focus groups indicate a wider need among the academic institutions for these databases – these include MLA and Music Literature (RILM) in FirstSearch; Philosoper's Index and Geography from SilverPlatter; ABI/INFORM and National Newspapers from ProQuest; and Project Muse.